

# CHRISTMAS CAROLS BY “KING JESUS” CHOIR, BETHLEHEM

On Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2013/3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2014, a concert was performed by the Orthodox choir of “King Jesus” under the spiritual guidance of the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan, the direction of Greek Orthodox theologian Mr Jandallah Al Masre, and the blessing of His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The concert was held under the aegis of His Excellency the President of the Palestinian State, Mr Mahmud Abbas Abu Mazen, in collaboration with the sponsor, Mr Said Taufik Khoury at the Convention Center near Solomon’s cisterns, between Bethlehem and Hebron.

His Beatitude Theophilos attended the concert accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias; the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; the Hegoumen of Fhes, Archimandrite Ieronymos; Archimandrite Ignatios, Archdeacon Evlogios and other Hagiotaphite Fathers, as well as representatives of other Christian denominations, i.e. the Apostolic Delegation, Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah, a representative of President Mahmud Abbas and other officials of the Palestinian State, i.e. Minister Ziad Al-Bandak, the representative of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem Mme Aspasia Mitsi; the Mayor of Bethlehem, Mme Vera Baboun, priests hailing from various cities of Israel and Palestine and a great crowd of approximately five hundred.

Before the start of this year’s ceremony, excerpts were shown from last year’s concert featuring the sponsor of both last year’s and this year’s concert, Mr Said Khoury.

This year, the ceremony began with a live broadcast of Mr Said Khoury from Athens, followed by the address of Prime Minister

Rami Hamdallah, who stressed the importance of the Palestinian land to the Palestinian people, and also of the coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the Palestinian state, which also celebrates the feast of Christmas.

His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, went on to address those present in Arabic, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2014/01/04/3017>

Mr George Bassous, Director of the Convention Center, was the next speaker, highlighting the significance of Christmas as a celebration of tolerance and philanthropy and favour of God towards man.

Upon the conclusion of the speeches began the performance of songs in the Byzantine style, complemented by musical instruments. The songs were ecclesiastical hymns dedicated to the period of Christmas, or carols translated by Mr Jandallah into Arabic.

Prime Minister Rame Hamdallah, who had to leave before the end of the concert, was awarded the honorary plaque of the choir by His Beatitude Theophilos.

In the same context, the Convention Center, represented by Mr George Bassous, offered to His Beatitude and the Prime Minister plaques featuring a mosaic representation of the Church of the Resurrection and the Temple of Solomon.

The choir awarded honorary plaques to His Beatitude, Mr Said Khoury, Mr George Bassous and Mr Suhair Francis.

Through the impeccable performance of exquisite hymns and Christmas carols, "King Jesus" choir moved the spectators during this praiseworthy preparation for Christmas, inviting thoughts about the power and vitality of our Greek Orthodox Community, inasmuch as it is nurtured by the life-giving sustenance of our ecclesiastical and national tradition.

## From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/EahWn1PNB78>

